

THE OK CLASSROOM

Running Time: 28:40

Film Summary

"The OK Classroom" presents Dr. Thomas Harris describing and demonstrating the Transactional Analysis techniques which form the basis of his book, "I'm OK - You're OK." Special meanings of the terms "Child, Parent, Adult, Transactions, Strokes, and Contract" are explained. Narrating documentary examples of his theories in action in a school, Dr. Harris offers practical suggestions for improving the student-teacher relationship. The human relations and discipline implications of his techniques are emphasized.

Relevant Thoughts

"School is a competitive situation with too many threats to the Child and too few opportunities, at the start, for even token achievements to minimize the Child's NOT OK feelings."

"The Transactional Analysis structure emphasizes an open rather than authoritarian classroom, since authoritarianism reinforces the Child's NOT OK feelings and shows him no way out."

"Our goal is to help children free themselves to make their own choices to take reasonable responsibility for their own lives as well as to enjoy those lives within the framework of that responsibility. This is the authentic OK for both teachers and children."

-Dr. Thomas Harris

Discussion Questions

Consider the following statement by Dr. Harris: "The 'Contract' is one of the best instruments I know of for assuring consistency in direction and discipline; yet, because it is drawn by the 'Adult,' it can be re-examined from time to time by the 'Adult' with the further benefit of keeping it up-to-date and flexible enough to meet changing realities." Discuss the climate in your own classroom: are "Adult-to-Adult" transactions common in your relations with the students? Do you see it as desirable to increase the possibility for more "Adult-to-Adult" relations?

Discuss the importance of "Strokes" for your students. Discuss positive and negative strokes; unsubstantiated praise. How do "Strokes" apply to your classroom curriculum and discipline?

Classroom Application

Design a curriculum approach which includes the necessity for a student to enter into an "Adult-to-Adult" Contract with you. In designing your approach, remember: "A 'Contract' is a statement of mutual expectations. It must be a two-way deal between 'Adult' and 'Adult' where there is a mutual win, and no one loses. It should be well defined so that the partners have no misconception." Implement your design.

Suggested Reading

I'm OK - You're OK, Dr. Thomas Harris.

